have taken over Sterling Computers including the licence for the Cellular Mobile Services, with a view to circumventing the prohibition on transfer of such licence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No Sir, the licence for cellular mobile service in Delhi was issued to M/s Sterling Cellular Ltd. and it is not transferable.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a).

(c) There is no request from the licence i.e. M/s. Sterling Cellular Ltd. for any transfer of licence or selling the equity to M/s Essar. However, some press reports regarding M/s. Essar acquiring a stake in Sterling Computer who is one of the promoters in Sterling Cellular have come to the notice of the Government.

Adequate orders for ITI

1242. SHRI B. K. HARI PRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Telephone industries Limited, after consistently excellent performance since its inception, has stared faltering by posting a first time loss in the first half of the current financial year;

(b) whether this is due to under utilisation of ITI's capacity in the face of stiff competition from MNCs now operating in Indian telecom sector;

(c) whether the Department of Telecommunications would ensure placement of adequate orders on ITI for switching equipment to keep its capacity fully utilised; and

(d) whether Government would allow the required time frame to ITI to put its new plans into operation, including State-of-the-art equipment for satellite communication and thereby provided a level playing field?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir. So far as loss in the first half of the year is concerned ITI Ltd. had posted a loss of about Rs. 17 crores during the first half of 1993-94 also.

(b) Losses during the first half of the year are due to several factors including the main aspect of general fall in price of the Telecom Equipments.

(c) and (d) With a view to utilise the capacities of its own PSEs i.e. ITI and HTL optimally as also to keep these PSEs commercially viable, DOT is following a policy under which 25 to 35 per cent of the DOT orders, are kept reserved for these PSEs, taken together, for the items which they manufacture. This policy is without any compromise in respect of price, quality and supply schedule. Timely formulation and implementation of IT plans is the basic responsibility of IT management. Providing a 'level playing field' to PSEs is a continuing process and Government keep on taking necessary steps as and when a need arises.

Pilot project for basic telephone service in Tamil Nadu

1243. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a pilot project has been approved for M/s. US West India providing basic telephone services in selected areas of Tamil Nadu.

(b) if so, the basis and rationale for such approval when DOT is simultaneously inviting proposals on open tender basis for similar services all-over India including Tamil Nadu.

(c) whether the DOT proposes to grant further pilot projects to other foreign companies as well and if so, the terms and conditions thereof;

(d) what are the contents of the approval granted in favour of M/s. US West India and also the policy decision of the Department in this behalf?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir. Only a letter of intent has been issued to M/s US West India Ltd. for a pilot project.

(b) National Telecom Policy provides for setting up of Pilot Projects in order to assess New Technologies and management techniques. They are for a limited period only.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

(d) In the letter of intent Government has expressed its willingness to grant a licence for a pilot project under the terms and conditions to be mutually agreed upon between DOT and M/s. US West India Ltd.

Criteria for awarding tenders for basic telephone services

1244. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria decided by the DOT for awarding tenders to be submitted by various prespective licences for basic telephone services;

(b) the weights given to individual criteria; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to aviod litigation as happened in the case of last tender for Mobile Cellular Services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The bidder has to comply with technical, commercial and financial conditions. In addition levy to be paid to Government, number of Direct Exchange Lines to be commissioned over a period of 12, 24 and 36 months, number of village public telephones to be provided as a percentage of Direct Exchange Lines, value of indigenous equipment to be used in the network for first three years and value of total equipment to be used in the network for first three years, will be the evaluation parameters.

(b) Weightage for parameters has not been announced.

(c) Government have tried to simplify the tender conditions.

Criteria for awarding bid for cellular mobile service

1245. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the maximum number of circles/service areas which one bidder company would/can be awarded or both the basic telephone services and cellular mobile services;

(b) the criteria for deciding the maximum number of circles to be awarded to a bidder company; and

(c) the basis for deciding/awarding specific circles, in case the bidder company is eligible/successful in bagging more than the maximum prescribed circles to be awarding to it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No such limit is fixed.

(b) and (c) In order to ensure that monopoly conditions do not develop, Government may restrict the maximum number of circles and decide on the circles to be awarded to one bidder, based upon bidders total networth and bidders preference.

नए टेलीफोन कनेक्शनों हेतु लक्ष्य

1246. **श्रीमती सुषमा स्वराज :**
श्री राम जेठमलानी :

क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार ने वर्ष 1994-95 के दौरान नये टेलीफोन कनेक्शन जारी करने की संख्या का कोई लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया था;